

ABSTRACT

Locating a lost or misplaced mobile station. A user may dial a designated number, enter the phone number of the misplaced or lost mobile, and the network responsively plays a message to the user informing the user of the geographic location of the cell and sector, typically including city and state information, as well as boundary information of the sector, such as street boundaries. In an alternative embodiment, a user may input the MIN of the lost mobile to a web-based form, and thereby retrieve a map of the cell-sector location of the MS. A service node (SN) is configured to receive a request from a user trying to locate a mobile device. The SN either prompts the user to provide the phone number of the mobile device via an IVRU or through a web-based form sent to a web server connected to the SN. The SN then initiates a call to the mobile device. The standard network processing of such a call includes sending a facilities available (FAVAIL) message to the service control point (SCP). The SCP identifies the call as a request to locate a mobile, and responsively provides location information to the calling SN. The SN in turn provides the location information to the user either by playing a voice message corresponding to the location information or by instructing a web server to provide a map of the location to the user over the world wide web. The method may include an authentication step to ensure that only authorized users are able to obtain location information.